



Notes of River Users Consultative Forum (Estuary) Meeting
24th November 2011

Present:-

Capt Chris McQueen	CM	Deputy Harbour Master (Lower) – PLA
Nicola Jenkins	NJ	Environment & Management Systems Mgr–PLA
Martin Garside	MG	Corporate Affairs Manager – PLA
Julian Parkes	JP	Harbour Master SMS
Jeff Stacey	JS	Contingencies Manager – PLA
Rod Owen	RO	Pilot - PLA
Lisa Cockerill	LC	Assistant to HM(L)
Chris Edwards	CE	RYA(E)
Michael Shefras	MS	ATYC/ RYA Thames
David Jones	DJ	ATYC
Nick Dodson	ND	Trinity House
Steve Seabrook	SS	Kent & Essex Joint Police Marine Unit
Simon Hiscock	SH	Kent Police SB Frontier Operations
Guy Peto	GP	Medway Ports
Archie Turnbull	AT	MCA

1. Apologies

Roger Barker, Trinity House. Roy Stanbrook, Harbour Master (Lower). Mark Towens, Deputy Harbour Master (SMS) PLA. John Window, PLA Haven Master. Cathryn Spain, Harbour Master Medway Ports. Will Wright, Kent & Essex Sea Fisheries. Tom Sims, Medway Yachting Assoc, RYA SE. Andy Rudge, MCA.

2. Minutes of RUCF (Estuary) Meeting 19th May 2011.

These were agreed as a correct record.

3. Matters arising from 2.

No matters arising.

4. PLA Sitrep

i. Safety Management System

JP updated the meeting on the responses and concerns raised during the consultation on the Byelaws. These mainly related to some concerns that new Byelaws would make holding recreational events more onerous to organise and was seen as unnecessary intrusion.

The concerns relate to requirements for risk assessments for events. It was explained that a note is to be included on how HM will interpret and apply the byelaw.

Other objections have come in regarding new speed limits in London. The PLA has taken steps to explain new byelaws in more detail and to offer some reassurances.

Dft will make a final decision on the Byelaws. The PLA still hopes to get Byelaws in place by the Olympics.

Permanent Notice to Mariners 2011 – now published.

General Directions 2010 – now published.

Tug Code of Practice 2010 – now published.

Recreational Users Guide – a new edition is planned for 2012.

JP stated that he had written to local and continental yacht clubs and representative bodies outlining procedures during the Olympics, in particular the need to have pre-booked a mooring and that if vessel has no mooring it will be turned away. A full discussion followed about arrangements on the river at that time.

JP to send Notice to Mariners regarding Olympics to CE and MS.

ACTION: HM SMS

MG showed the new PLA Olympics video which was about to go on the PLA and Boating on the Thames websites to the committee.

A number of recreational sector representatives present requested copies of DVD.

ACTION: MG

MS praised the PLA website in relation to improved information for recreational users.

ii Port Security and ISPS Code

Security level remains the same at ISPS level 1.

iii. Environmental Matters

NJ explained current situation with the Marine Management Organisation regarding dredging licences on Thames and about the MCZ for Thames recommended by Balanced Seas Project process and Marine & Coastal Act 2009. The conservation zones proposed for the Thames are under consideration. NJ showed the meeting a map showing proposed MCZ key areas.

iv General

CM reported that Tilbury Power Station is no longer burning coal, but has now switched to burning wood pellets (Biomass) for trial period until power station licence expires in 2013.

Trade for the whole of Port of London continues to recover slowly, next year predicted at about 51 million tonnes.

5. Navigational safety and Consultancy Matters

i. Estuary Incidents

No incidents with recreational users.

08/07/11	GAS LEGACY	GAS LEGACY whilst unberthing at Coryton 1 ship the bow lent on downstream fender causing minor damage as it sprung off and cleared berth. Damage to fender minimal, no further action.
04/08/11	NINA 1	NINA 1 whilst transferring fuel from aft to forward fuel tank for ships bow thruster a small quantity of oil was spilt and entered the water. Oil transfer was done by use of portable hose and no attempt was made to block scuppers prior to transfer and vessel failed to report spill to London VTS. Company has been successfully prosecuted £10,000 fine plus costs imposed.
06/09/11	DIANA C	Unmanned dumb barge DIANA C moored 10 metres off Southend pier with anchors and lines to pier to carry out work on the pier broke adrift in high winds and went under pier causing damage to the end of pier. Access to pier was closed to public and vessels so damage could be investigated and for repairs to be carried out. Thames Towage provided tug assistance to recover barge.
25/10/11	MED ARCTIC	MED ARCTIC on berthing at CTN5 on flood tide, with Sl'y force 3 wind contacted the berth. MED ARCTIC port bow landed heavily on down stream fender but the bows flare overrode the fender hitting concrete top decking over 2 to 3 metre area. Damage to med arctic restricted to indentation damage to flare of bow on port side well above waterline. No pollution or injuries resulted from incident. Briggs Marine closed berth until

		structural survey was carried out, and MED ARCTIC directed to return to anchor.
11/11/11	CLYDE FISHER	This was a near miss pollution incident. The CLYDE FISHER on resuming loading of Kerosene cargo at S jetty following a stoppage to clean line and tanks contaminated with off spec had to stop cargo operation due to leakage. Kerosene was seen coming from gas free room on the main deck. Incident was reported and crew started an immediate clean up on deck. TOSCA RESPOND was dispatched to check area and to confirm that there had been no pollution in the river. Incident was due to human error, lines were incorrectly set prior to resuming cargo loading. No enforcement action taken as no oil entered the water. Company to review procedures.

ii. Sunk VTS

CM – one incident – involved a LPG gas ship and Harwich container ship – near miss. MCA looking into this.

6. Other updates

i. MCA

AT updated the meeting on a number of MCA issues.

Thames Coastguard at Walton due to close after Summer 2014. Dover will take over area, but to lose four staff by 2015. Sunk VTS will be operated by Dover. MCA and UK Border agency are taking over building in Fareham.

The Emergency Towing vessels (ETVs) are also being removed along with the Maritime Incident Response Group (MIRG) in respect of shipboard fires.

ii. Environment Agency – no attendance.

iii. RNLI – no attendance.

iv. Medway

Kingsnorth Power Station may also convert to burning Biomass.

A meeting with the MMO, chaired by Medway Ports, had been held with key stakeholders including yacht clubs.

v. RYA East/South East/Kent

CE reported on changes to the RYA's regional boundaries.

vi. Police (Joint Marine Kent & Essex Unit)

SS and SH reported jointly on a number of policing, security and crime issues. This included updates on policing during the Olympics and Queens Diamond Jubilee (QDJ) periods. The importance of reporting suspicious activity at any time was emphasised. An update was also given on Operation Kraken matters.

Threat level is moderate to maritime. Biggest threat is rogue vessel.

vii. Others

ND Trinity House – moves at Gore Channel – January. London Array cable route – called up at short notice to move buoys. Communications hopefully better. Need more notice.

Joint meeting with PLA/TH/Medway to be arranged to discuss issues with cable lay.

CM - cable laying has gone through Princes Channel – progress – crossing entrance Fishermans Gat. Will close Fishermans Gat when being laid. Will be broadcast on VTS.

7. River Events

Southend Air Festival	Saturday 26 th and Sunday 27 th May 2012
Queens Diamond Jubilee	3 rd June 2012 (people should have registered will have inspections on boat)
Sail Amsterdam – tall ships Gravesend/Tilbury – London	25 th July – 12 th August
Gravesend Town Regatta	June 2012
Dartford Bridge Mixed Race	June 2012
Benfleet Yacht Club “Nore Race”	July 2012
Gravesend Summer Regatta	July 2012

Thames Sailing Barge Match July 2012

Lower Thames Challenge July 2012

8. River Works

i. London Gateway

Phase 1 reclamation complete. Sea wall construction is well advanced. Phase 2 reclamation and dredging planned to start January 2012. DPW have announced that by Q4 2013 London Gateway will begin operations.

ii. Wind Farm Update

Gunfleet Sands – nothing new to report.

London Array - covered earlier in minutes, only laid one cable this year. Next year will be three.

Kentish Flats – borehole works on extension.

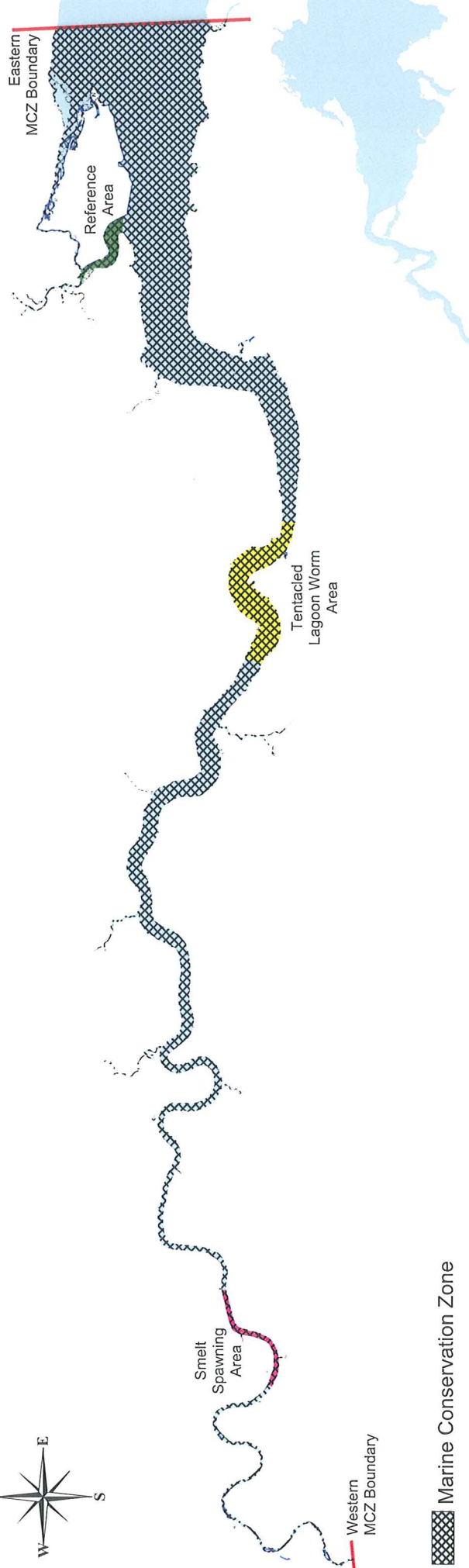
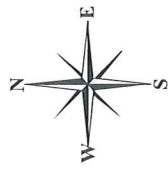
9. Any other Business

Crossrail – bidders chosen in new year. Will be able to gauge impact on river. Next meeting hopefully more information. Significant business depending on successful bidder.

10. Time/ Date Of next meeting

1030 / Thursday 31st May 2012 – London River House

Marine Conservation Zone - River Thames



 Marine Conservation Zone